

Bridge & District History Society

NEWSLETTER

DOVER CASTLE VISIT

On Saturday 24th February, a cold clear day with a flat calm sea, a group of us visited Dover Castle. We were able to enjoy wonderful views across to France and down to Dungeness. We then visited the wartime underground tunnels. These have recently been extended to show the original plotting table and the offices used by Admiral Ramsay during the evacuation from Dunkirk- Operation Dynamo. A statue to Admiral Ramsay has recently been erected at the castle. Following the visit we enjoyed our usual cream tea in the Underground cafeteria which had been opened especially for us.

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

Due to circumstances beyond our control and the foot and mouth epidemic we have to change the next two meetings in the programme.

On **Tuesday 27 March** - We will now have a talk on the Bronze Age Dover Boat. Come along to Bridge Village Hall at 7.30 pm and hear about the first cross-channel ferry. This will be followed up by a visit on

Saturday 28 April -To the Bronze Age Boat gallery in Dover combined with a visit to the historic Crabble Mill and a Kentish tea.

Tuesday 22 May - a meeting at Bridge Village Hall with a talk on the Kent and East Sussex steam railway by Doug Lindsay

Saturday 16th June - An all day visit to Tenterden with a trip on the Kent and East Sussex steam railway to Bodiam with a cream tea on the return train journey

Bodiam Castle



THE WATERS OF WOE

The recent flooding of the Nailbourne has brought to mind the legends about this river. It is said that when the river floods, woe is predicted and this was borne out when the river flooded in 1939. This year, however, the flooding has been so extensive that the woe has been directly visited upon the poor people who have been at it's mercy and endured the flooding of their homes and businesses. Not one village along the Nailbourne has escaped and, as far as we can tell, this is an historic event since the records show that this is most extensive flooding for over 300 years. I know it will be many months before some people can get their houses back together but hopefully the level of the water has started to recede.

Patricbourne



**BRIDGE
& DISTRICT
HISTORY
SOCIETY**

JANE AUSTEN IN KENT

For those who missed our meeting on the 14th November, and it was not the best of evenings for weather, Meriel Connor has kindly written a synopsis of the talk by Anthea Bryant

Anthea gave us a most interesting talk about Jane Austen, illustrated by slides of excellent quality. Jane was one of six brothers and one sister. One of her brothers was epileptic, and was put in an institution where the family had nothing more to do with him a sad indication of how such a condition was regarded then. Otherwise, the family was articulate, cultured and happy, though never wealthy. Jane's contact with the wealthy was through other members of her family, and this, Anthea suggested, placed her rather in the position of an observer, looking in on a more affluent way of life. Her first experience of gracious living was at the home of her uncle, Francis, who was a successful lawyer and land agent to the Sackvilles at Knole. Jane visited him at the Red House, his home in Sevenoaks.

The Knight family of Godmersham adopted one of Jane's brothers, Edward, and he eventually took their name. This was important to Jane because it was as Edward's guest that she was introduced to high society. Edward was to inherit a number of houses, including Goodnestone and Godmersham, where he implemented many improvements and introduced some of the fashionable decorative features so popular at the time, like bridges, follies and ruins. At Godmersham, he even had the road (the A28) moved to its present position! It was in the summerhouse at Godmersham that Jane probably wrote part of Mansfield Park. Jane revelled in the life of a large country house, and found there all the material she wanted for her books. Anthea described many aspects of the social life of the time, telling us, for example, that in a large country house it took thirty-six servants to go round changing the candles!

Edward married Elizabeth Bridges, who bore him thirteen children. Sadly, her last confinement killed her. One year, three of his daughters were married, two in a double wedding ceremony at Goodnestone. Elizabeth's sister Sophia married William Deeds, Lady Fitzwalter's ancestor, in 1793, and so a link was made with both sides of the Fitzwalter family. Even then, there was a cricket pitch at Goodnestone, and Anthea told us that Jane, having had six brothers, enjoyed playing not only cricket, but also rounders and baseball not an American invention as we might have thought.

Jane was an accomplished seamstress and also a competent musician and practised for an hour each day before breakfast. She bought a piano for £200 a huge expense at the time. Though she visited Goodnestone often, she

never stayed there but rather at Rowling, where she rewrote part of *Pride and Prejudice*. Even closer to home, Anthea told us, Jane was familiar with the Whitefriars, (though she wouldn't recognize it if she were to visit it now!). When her brother Edwards adopted father died, his widow moved from Godmersham to the house which stood in the Whitefriars, where Jane visited her. Together they called on a lady who lived in Cathedral House in the Precincts who was to be the model for poor Miss Bates in *Emma*! Jane visited Canterbury more than once with Edward. On one occasion he visited the new Canterbury prison, then a model of what a modern prison should be! Jane also visited Ramsgate, where her brother Francis had a house on the harbour front. Jane learnt much about the sea from her sailor brothers, whose hero was Horatio Nelson. Two of them became admirals.

From Godmersham, Jane sometimes walked to Chilham Castle and there she saw the elephant house built in the extensive grounds. Jane received at least one proposal of marriage. One she accepted but changed her mind overnight! She spent the last years of her life in Hampshire, at Chawton, on Edward Austen-Knights vast Hampshire estate. Jane is buried in Winchester Cathedral with her father, where she is remembered simply as his daughter with no reference to her own achievement!

Meriel Connor

CONTACTS

If you wish to join Bridge & District History Society please come along to any meeting in Bridge Village Hall and you will be made most welcome.

The evening meetings are informal and sociable. If you have difficulty in getting to any meeting, transport and/or escorts can usually be arranged with other members living nearby.

Membership is annual commencing in September. Rates are £5.00 single, £7.50 double and £2.50 for each additional person residing at the same address.

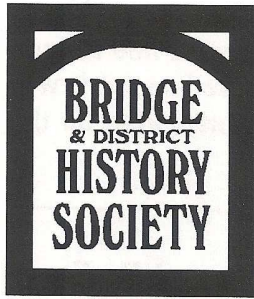
For more information please contact:-

Bill Dawson - Secretary

Telephone 831044

John Bishop - Chairman

Telephone 832596



NEWSLETTER

The new programme for 2001/2

With the completion of another very enjoyable and successful year for the Society we now have next seasons programme ready. With this is enclosed an application form for renewal of membership. Prompt return of the membership form would help us enormously

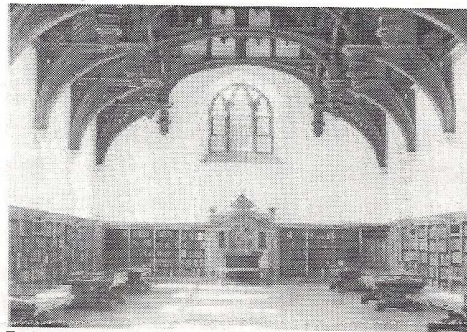
This year as an experiment we are enclosing a form listing all our visits and would ask you to return it with the membership application form indicating which visits would interest you. We emphasise that this does not in any way commit you, it would just give us an idea of what numbers we can expect to be interested.

We have drawn up an interesting programme of visits starting on Saturday 20th October 2001 with a Canterbury Walk led by Meriel Conner. The cost will include all entrance fees. She will be exploring many little known aspects of Canterbury and the visit promises to be both enjoyable and instructive.

The next function on Saturday 15th December 2001 is our traditional annual Christmas buffet to be held at the White Horse Inn in Bridge. Those of you who were there last year will appreciate the care and attention levied by Alan and his staff at the White Horse to make sure we had a most enjoyable afternoon.

On Tuesday 26th February 2002 we have our Ghost Evening. This was last held two years ago and when we say the atmosphere was spine chilling those who were there will remember - due to an act of God- just how spine chilling it was. Come and be prepared to be chilled and thrilled in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

In April next year we are planning a visit to Lambeth Palace which we will combine with a visit to the Museum of Gardening History which is next door to the Palace. We are as yet unable to confirm the date or the cost but further details will be advised to you as soon as they are available.



Lambeth Palace - Great Hall.

Maidstone is our next venue on Saturday 18th May 2002, we will have a guided tour of the Archbishops palace and other attractions followed by a river walk and a cream tea.

Our final visit is to Ypres with it's many reminders of the First World War but also with many beautiful and historic buildings to see. A very long day by coach from Bridge, but you will find it a rewarding and memorable day.

Programme 2000-2001

Last season's programme had to be rearranged at short notice due to the illness of our speaker on Romney Marsh and then by the foot and mouth outbreak which closed the countryside and made our follow up visit to the Romney Marsh impossible.

As reported in our last newsletter we were fortunate in obtaining the services of another speaker, Peter Clark who gave a fascinating talk on the Dover Bronze Age boat. This was followed up by a visit to the Dover Museum and it's Bronze Age boat gallery. It was combined with a visit to Crabble Mill and the traditional obligatory cream tea.

The last two meetings of the year were both concerned with the Kent and East Sussex railway and below are details of the lecture and follow up visit.

Kent and East Sussex Railway

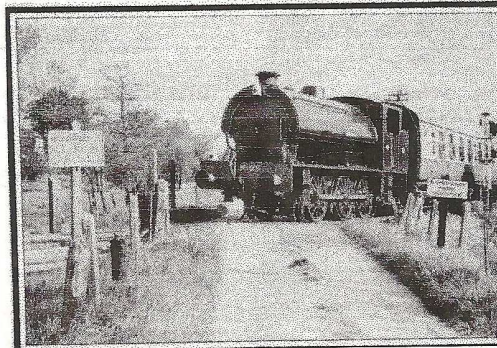
Doug Lindsay from the Kent and East Sussex Railway, a preserved steam railway operating from Tenterden to Bodiam, gave us a very interesting lecture on the history of the railway and the early plans for it's bid to link up with the main lines from Hastings and Ashford to London. He explained how it had been built under the Light Railway Act under the auspices of Colonel Stephens. In the beginning the major source of revenue was agricultural freight but with the coming of reliable petrol driven road transport this traffic died and the railway lost money for many years until it fell into the hands of British Rail and was closed down.

He recounted the many trials and tribulations of the early volunteers in their battle with officialdom and

British Rail before they were able to operate a service. Now the line is open to Bodiam and they are hopeful it will eventually reach Robertsbridge on the Hastings main line.

Visit to Tenterden and Bodiam

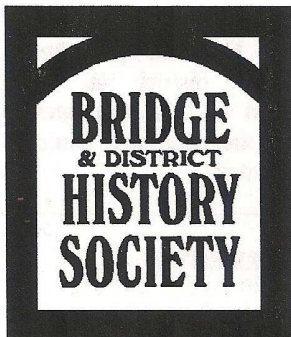
Following on from the talk by Doug Lindsay an intrepid band of members left Bridge by coach despite an awful weather forecast and soon ran into heavy rain which continued on our arrival at Tenterden. We had arranged a guided tour of the town and fortunately soon after the tour started the rain ceased and we had no more for the rest of the day. After a very interesting tour of the town we all scattered to find lunch and then assembled at the station for our train ride.



Going to Bodiam Castle we had a diesel train with an observation car. On arrival at Bodiam there was an opportunity to visit the castle and then we returned to Tenterden behind a steam train. On the return journey we were served with a superb cream tea and then returned back to Bridge by coach.

A very enjoyable day for all those who took part.

Bridge & District Society Newsletter
August 2001 issue.



NEWSLETTER

October 2001.

MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

Another new season has started. It hardly seems possible that the Society has been running for over six years. It was encouraging to see how many old and new members turned up for our first meeting on the 25th September. Although it does get rather nerve - wracking when the seventy-two chairs in the hall have been used up and people are still arriving at the front door! However we coped and are not quite at capacity yet.

At this first meeting the bulbs on our projector failed although hopefully by the time you receive this newsletter they have been replaced, but we must extend our grateful thanks to Ken Stacey for dashing off to fetch his projector and "saving the day". I hope you all felt the wait was worth it. Personally I thought that Derek Butler's talk and slides were excellent and a really good start to the new season.

I drove along Old Dover Road today and really noticed, for the first time in years, some of the old buildings mentioned, plus a few not really noticed before. Changes seem to happen without us paying much attention until we look at old slides, books and photographs.

History, I think, is like that in some way. We are now living through a period that will have a great impact on tomorrow's historical scholars, both locally and internationally. Locally, with the Foot and Mouth epidemic and the winter flooding, which we all hope is on the way to being resolved. Internationally, of course, the terrible events in the USA and the rest of the so-called civilised world which moves and affects us all deeply.

Returning to Society business, may I remind you about our forthcoming events. Please do give us plenty of notice if you intend participating, this will help us a great deal to keep things running smoothly.

The time will soon be upon us to begin planning next season's programme. If any member has any idea for

forthcoming talks and events, please do not hesitate to let one of the committee know. We also welcome any letters comments or articles of interest for the Newsletter.

Please let us know if you feel that things are not going as well as you expect, after all it's your Society.

Once again many thank for your support and enjoy the rest of the new season.

John Bishop.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2001-2002

We have re-organised the duties of the committee members and below is list of the committee members, their duties and their telephone numbers should you wish to contact any of them.

Chairman	
John Bishop	Telephone 832596
Treasurer	
Maurice Raraty	Telephone 830508
Correspondence Secretary	
Jenny Vye	Telephone 830983
Press Officer	
Meriel Connor	Telephone 830487
Publications and Membership Secretary	
David Gilmour	Telephone 832450
Agenda and Minutes Secretary	
David Millyard	Telephone 830256
Catering Officer	
Janet Bishop	Telephone 832596

As the Chairman has said above, please contact any member of the committee if you need any help.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

This year we will be issuing membership cards and they are being sent out with this newsletter. If you have paid and not received a card please contact the membership Secretary.

BOOK EARLY

Last year we made a loss on some of the visits as we had fixed costs which were not covered by sufficient numbers. To alleviate the problem this year we have adopted a new policy. If there are insufficient numbers for any event by the final booking date then that event will be cancelled. To help us control this situation this year we have introduced one booking form for all the visits. It has a simple tear off slip which we ask you to complete and send with a stamped addressed envelope to the organiser of each visit. He or she will then send you the tickets for the event or visit. If the visit is cancelled then all monies will be returned.

On the other side of the coin, some of the visits we have arranged in the new programme are strictly limited in numbers and early booking is advised. We will operate on a strictly first come, first served basis so send your booking forms in as soon as possible.

The visits with very strict limits on numbers are The Canterbury Walk, The Ghost Evening, The Christmas Buffet, Lambeth Palace and Ypres. The booking form is enclosed with this newsletter.

HIDDEN CANTERBURY



Our first meeting of the new season was very well attended and we were particularly pleased to see some new faces. After the Annual General Meeting and an unscheduled coffee break due to the non operational state of the projector, Derek Butler gave us an exceptionally good slide show of Old Canterbury. Many of the buildings he showed us now no longer look the same or have completely disappeared. He pointed out many items of interest which were not obvious to the casual observer.

He showed us how the very poor people lived in Victorian times with slides showing the tenements that were crowded with people living in very insanitary conditions, no wonder life expectancy was so very short. A very good show for those who knew Canterbury in the old days but equally of great interest to those who do not know it all well but who now

know it better and a great introduction to the Canterbury Walk.

After the meeting there was an opportunity to buy the various books Derek Butler has had published showing Canterbury and the district in old photographs and these were sold out within minutes. The photograph at the top of the paragraph comes from his book "Canterbury Revisited".

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Our next event is on Saturday the 20th of October and is a guided walk around Canterbury by Meriel Connor. She has included all admission prices in the cost of the ticket and hopes to get us into some of the places not normally open to the general public. This promises to be a most interesting exploration of the city and will be of particular interest to those who attended the talk by Derek Butler. It will also be of help to those participating in the quiz at the Christmas buffet, as the photo quiz will be based on Canterbury so that no one village in our Society can have an unfair advantage.

This visit is in member's own cars and we will meet up at the new Dover Road Park and Ride at 1.30 pm. For those without cars who still wish to come we will organise a shuttle service from the Bridge Recreation Ground to the Park and Ride. If you wish to use this service please contact the organiser, John Bishop. We are limited in numbers on this visit and if it is substantially oversubscribed we will organise another visit later on in the season.

On Tuesday the 27th of November we will have a talk on Nelson in Kent. This will be by Anthea Bryant who, you may remember, last year gave us the talk on Jane Austen. This time she will talk on Nelson and his associations with Kent and his visits to his friends in the great houses in Kent and to this area in particular. This meeting will be in Bridge Village Hall as usual and will start at 7.30 pm.

The Visit to Lambeth Palace has now been confirmed for Wednesday the 10th of April 2002 and the cost will be £16.00 for members and £18.00 for non-members.

We will be travelling by coach, leaving Bridge Post Office at 9.30 am and first visiting the Museum of Gardening History which is next door to Lambeth Palace. After lunch which can be taken in the Museum or you can bring a packed lunch we will have a guided tour of the Palace. This will finish about 4.30pm and we will be home by approximately 6.30 pm.

Published and printed by David Gilmour.

BRIDGE & DISTRICT HISTORY SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

December 2001.

Christmas Buffet.

Our next big event is the Christmas buffet on Saturday 15th December. As last year we will meet up in the village hall with hot soup and mince pies to stave off the hunger pangs while perusing the photos for the photo quiz.

This year's photos are of Canterbury, which will give everyone a fair chance of identifying the places depicted.

After the hot soup and mince pies we will adjourn to the White Horse across the road for more eats and other entertainment.

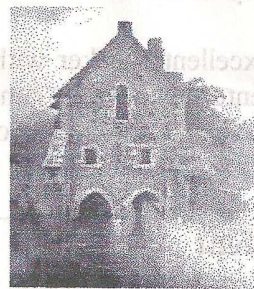


Those who came last year will remember how well Alan and his staff looked after us and what a good time was had by one and all. There are still a few places left so if you have not returned your slip to John Bishop please do so as soon as possible.

We look forward to seeing you there, but if we don't see you before Christmas, the Chairman and committee members wish you a merry Christmas.

A Canterbury Walk- A report

On a dull overcast Saturday the 20th of October 28 members met up at the new Dover Road Park and Ride to join Meriel Connor for her Canterbury walk. This took us via Burgate to Blackfriars, the Dominican Priory, Eastbridge Hospital, Greyfriars and ended up at



Greyfriars

the Heritage Museum. Fortunately the rain held off until the very end of the walk but just as we were walking back to the bus the skies opened. We saw many points of interest and others were pointed out that we had walked past many times and not noticed. A very enjoyable and instructive afternoon was had by all.

New booking system for visits.

The new system is working very well and we thought it would be useful for you to know how it will work in detail.

When the organiser receives your slip and cheque the slips are numbered to note order of receipt (first come, first served). The organiser then holds the cheque and this will not be cashed until the final booking date shown on the slip. If the event is cancelled then the cheques will be returned.

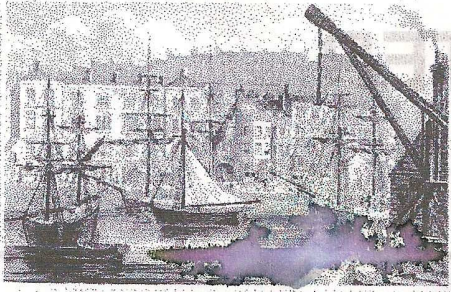
As some of the events are many months ahead and cheques are only valid for six months could we ask you to date your cheques to agree with the final booking date shown on the slip.

When the final booking date is reached the organiser will send out the tickets giving details of where to meet and at what time.

If you have booked and not received tickets within a week of the final booking date then please phone the organiser and check that you are booked.

Old Ramsgate

Our first meeting in the New Year at Bridge Village Hall on January 22nd, will be a talk by Brian Fagg on Old Ramsgate



Ramsgate Quay in its Victorian heyday.

Brian is an excellent speaker with the ability to inform and entertain at the same time. Come and enjoy an evening in friendly company.

Nelson in Kent.

The last meeting before this newsletter was on Tuesday the 27th of November in Bridge Village Hall when we had a talk by Anthea Bryant. No doubt many of you will remember. That on her last visit she spoke to us on Jane Austen in Kent. This evening she spoke on our most famous admiral and naval hero, Nelson and his life and career, starting with his introduction to the navy at Chatham.

Anthea outlined the highlights of his life in many different locations and of his extraordinary abilities. Most unusually he was not only a hero after his death but also a hero in his own lifetime.

Forthcoming Attractions

Tuesday 20th February 2002

Ghost evening at the White Horse Inn.

This promises to be a really enthralling and atmospheric evening. Eat by candlelight and be entertained by tales to make your blood curdle.

Those who were at the last ghost evening two years ago will remember that supernatural intervention can and does happen.

We still have some places available – please send those slips off to John Bishop if you have not done so already.

Wednesday 10th April 2002

Visit to Lambeth Palace.

Bookings are coming along very nicely but we still have a few spare places if you wish to join us. Guided tours of Lambeth Palace have been arranged and we also include a visit to the Gardening Museum and John Tradescant's garden which is right next door to Lambeth Palace.

So once again if you haven't booked please send those slips and cheques in.

Snippets from old newspapers

NEW ROAD from CANTERBURY towards DOVER.

NOTICE is hereby Given,

THAT the TURNPIKE GATE, now standing in BRIDGE-STREET, will be removed, on Monday next, the 13th Instant, to the END of the NEW ROAD, next BRIDGE; and that HENRY BEAR is appointed by the Trustees to receive the Tolls at the said Gate, on and after that Day. And the next Meeting of the Trustees will be holden at the Sign of the STAR, without Saint George's Gate CANTERBURY, on Friday the 17th Instant, to take into Consideration the Improvements of the Road up BRIDGE HILL.

By Order of the Trustees.

JOHN HODGES, CLERK

CANTERBURY, June 6, 1791

(*Kentish Post*, June 7, 1791)

To be LET.

A Mansion House called BRIDGE-PLACE, now in the occupation of William Hougham, Esq; jun. Consisting of an eating parlour, 22 by 16½; a drawing-room, 22 by 17, and a small room. -On the second-floor, good bedrooms; and four garrets, with proper offices for a family; a coach-house with stabling for seven horses, and eleven acres of very fine pasture; two gardens; and a cottage, consisting of a brewhouse, laundry and dairy, with good lodging-rooms over them. It is situated in the neighbourhood of Barham Downs and three miles from Canterbury.

For particulars enquire of Mr. DILNOT, Patricxbourne.

(*Kentish Gazette*, March 1st 1791)

HOUSE - BREAKING.

Whereas on Thursday night the 14th or early on Friday morning the 15th of this instant October, 1790, the house of Mr. Robert Kingsland, at the Sign of the Red Lion at Bridge, was entered by means of a ladder placed against the window of a back chamber, the casement of which was opened by taking out a pane of glass; from which chamber the following articles were stolen:

A worked muslin apron bound with white ribbon; a worked handkerchief, bound with ditto; a clear lawn apron, worked in sprigs; a striped muslin apron, scalloped round the edges; a striped lawn apron; two pair of dark worsted stockings; one pillow-case; a new silk handkerchief not made; about 18 or so calico shirts, marked R.

Kingsland with Indian ink; and a quantity of cravats, marked and numbered in the same manner, with several other articles.

On the same night the house of Mr. Thomas Fletcher, at Bridge, was also entered by means of a ladder being placed against the window of the chamber in which Mr. Fletcher slept; from which they took a watch marked T.Fletcher on the inside case, and some silver from his breeches pockets.

Whoever will give such information as may be instrumental in securing the offenders, shall, on conviction, receive Five Guineas reward, by applying to R. Kingsland as above...

(*Kentish Gazette*, October 4th 1790)

Printed and published for Bridge & District
History Society by David Gilmour

February 2002

Golden Jubilee Year

Bridge and several other villages are making their own arrangements to celebrate this rare event, the last being in 1887.

As a society we are not having any special arrangements to mark this event but it is historical and I hope you will all record as many of the events that take place as you can for the benefit of future historians. It is the small personal details that can mean so much in the future.

I certainly enjoyed the festivities at the Silver Jubilee and hope this will be as good if not better.

Christmas festivities

The last event for the Society in 2001 was the Christmas Buffet at the Village Hall and the White Horse Inn. We met in the Village Hall for mulled wine and mince pies (which were delicious) and to view the photos for the Photo Quiz.

The photos were of Canterbury either taken by John Bishop or from one of Derek Butler's books on Canterbury. The views of "then" and "now" were especially interesting.

We then adjourned to the White Horse Inn where we enjoyed the Christmas buffet—once again Alan excelled himself—a super repast. A very convivial atmosphere enjoyed by all those who took part.

The prize-winners were:

Photo Quiz	Martin Vye
General Knowledge	Ann Gilmour
Lucky Number	Peter Lawrence

We also held a raffle and the Raffle prizes were won by

Joan Stingemore, Robin Dring, Meriel Connor, Gino Repattati, Kathleen Deebank and Sheila Macdonald.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If you change your address can you please let the membership secretary know, otherwise we cannot send newsletters and programmes to you.

The address is

Mr. David Gilmour. St. Quentin, Bekesbourne Lane, Bekesbourne, Kent, CT4 5DY.

Bill Dawson



Bill Dawson who was a founder member of the Society and the secretary for many years unfortunately passed away on Saturday 29 December 2001. He had been in poor health for the last couple of years but was particularly ill in the last twelve months after being diagnosed with cancer. He passed away at the Pilgrims Hospice in Canterbury.

Although he had only lived in Bridge for the last seven years, he really loved the village. Together with Jim Tamsitt he founded the society and many of you will remember him in his capacity of secretary and a driving force for the society. He was instrumental in organising a membership database and in the first few years he published the programme, together with the Nailbourne Times newsletter. He did so much for the society that I think it is no exaggeration to say that without him it would have folded instead of going from strength to strength as it has.

He was born in Dunstable on the 24th October and died at the relatively early age of 61. He will be sorely missed both by the Society and the village.

The funeral was held at St. Peter's church, Bridge on Wednesday the 9th January and in place of flowers, donations were sent to the Pilgrims' Hospice.

On behalf of the membership a substantial donation has been sent from the Society to the Pilgrim's Hospice in memory of Bill.

BRIDGE PARISH CHURCH

One of the last projects that Bill undertook was writing a history of St. Peter's Church, Bridge and overleaf we give details of some of his discoveries about the church.

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

Our next event on Tuesday the 26th February is the **GHOST EVENING** at the White Horse Inn in Bridge. This is now completely booked and we are sure that those attending will be in for a treat.

SMUGGLING IN KENT is the theme of our meeting on Tuesday 26th March in Bridge Village Hall. Peter Ewart will outline the history of this practice, of which Kent has always had the lion's share.

The visit to **LAMBETH PALACE** on Wednesday 10th April is now fully booked. Lambeth Palace tell us that they will not be able to arrange any additional places this year.

The day out to **MAIDSTONE** on Saturday the 18th May is booking well, if you are interested please send in your applications now.

The same applies to the visit to **YPRES** on Saturday the 22nd June, there are still a few places available.

Kent History Federation One Day Conference

This will take place at Lydd on Saturday 11th May 2002 at the Lydd Community Hall, Manor Road, Lydd. After the morning conference programme with lectures on Romney Marsh, Kent Monumental Brasses and The Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway, there are nine afternoon tours, five to places of interest in Lydd town, three to Dungeness, the R.S.P.B centre, the nuclear power station and the lighthouses and one to Lydd-on-Sea for the Listening Ears. If you wish to attend please contact the Secretary for full details and a booking form

OLD RAMSGATE

Our last meeting on the 22nd January was the very entertaining talk by Brian Fagg on Old Ramsgate. We had an audience of over 60 for him and they were well rewarded with a talk that always held our interest and showed many aspects including many accidents to cars, buses, trams and trains. Even with much less traffic to contend with, travelling in the olden days was more fraught with peril than now. As with all these glimpses of old towns and villages we seem to be looking at an era now lost for ever

BRIDGE PARISH CHURCH

The church as seen today is the result of extensive restoration work undertaken in 1859-60 by the architect Giles Gilbert Scott, when the walls were completely refaced with the dark knapped flint- a fine example of the Kentish craft, and Bathstone facings. But behind this facing (with the exception of the Vestry on the north-east side and most of the tower and its stair-turret on the south-east side) Canterbury Archaeological Trust, who surveyed the church in 1994, say that the core of all the main walls must be medieval. Also during the restoration the north aisle was enlarged by extending it westwards, and the wall of the south aisle was raised to its present height

From the surviving remains Canterbury Archaeological Trust say that there is no doubt that the nave, chancel, south aisle and tower base all date from the 12th century, and though it is possible that the nave may date from a century earlier there is no visible evidence for this

NEXT YEAR'S PROGRAMME

We are planning next year's programme and if you have any suggestions as to what you would like to hear about or where you would like to visit we would be pleased to hear from you.

We are thinking of changing the format of the Christmas buffet and would be very interested in your views

Please contact any committee member

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, PATRIBOURNE

I have been doing some research into Patribourne church and find that originally it looked very different from what is there now.

Joining on to the chancel there was only a nave and one aisle, and these were covered by a single cat slide roof. The tower had a small pyramid on top and not a spire. The three bells were originally cast probably in 1325 and 2 were recast in 1674 by Palmars at St. Dunstan's in Canterbury.

Printed and Published by David Gilmour on behalf of Bridge & District History Society.

April 2002

Smuggling in Kent

Our last meeting was the talk on Smuggling in Kent by Peter Ewart. His entertaining talk explained that Kent has always been the prime area for smuggling because of its situation between the Continent, the major source, and London, the best market for luxury goods. He told us that all levels of society were involved and in the 18th century it was the black economy of its time. Profits could be enormous but the risks became increasingly greater with the introduction of the Royal Navy Coastal Blockade with punishments, if caught, of transportation for 7 years, 14 years or for life. It was not all a one way traffic as wool was smuggled from Britain to the Continent. Peter gave us graphic illustrations of the brutalities inflicted by the various smuggling gangs such as the Hawkhurst gang and the Aldington gang rampaging through Kent torturing and murdering

Golden Jubilee Year

Although we do not have any arrangements for celebrating the Golden Jubilee we have been asked by various organisations to assist them with their celebrations.

The timetable of events we are involved in is:-

Tuesday 4 June

Walk around Bridge by Lyminge History Society
Led by Dr. Maurice Raraty

Tuesday 11 June

Walk around Bridge by Tenterden History Society
Led by Dr. Maurice Raraty

Tuesday 18 June

Golden Jubilee walk around Bridge for local people
Led by Dr. Maurice Raraty.

Meet 7.30 pm White Horse Inn, Bridge—cost £1.00

Thursday 20 June

Wine and Wisdom evening in Bridge Village Hall
History Quiz with questions set by Society.
Question Master and scorers required.

Saturday 22 June

Bridge village Golden Jubilee celebrations with an all day fete.

Forthcoming Attractions

Wednesday 10 April 2002

Lambeth Palace

We have had a couple of last minute cancellations and if anyone still wishes to go please ring David Gilmour on 01227 832450 **urgently**. First come, first served.

Saturday 11 May 2002

KHF at Lydd

Kent History Federation One Day Conference

This will take place at Lydd on Saturday 11th May 2002 at the Lydd Community Hall, Manor Road, Lydd. After the morning conference programme with lectures on Romney Marsh, Kent Monumental Brasses and The Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway, there are nine afternoon tours, five to places of interest in Lydd town, three to Dungeness, the R.S.P.B centre, the nuclear power station and the lighthouses and one to Lydd-on-Sea for the Listening Ears. If you wish to attend please contact the Secretary, Jenny Vye, for full details and a booking form

Saturday 18 May 2002

Day out to Maidstone

Members should meet at Bridge Recreation Ground at 1.00 pm so that lifts can be organised for those that need them. We shall then make our way in members cars to the Park and Ride in Maidstone. Outside the Archbishop's palace we shall meet our guide, Mrs. Nielson-Kerr, who will conduct us on a tour of historic Maidstone, which will include a visit to the Archbishop's Palace and the Carriage Museum. We will finish with a cream tea.

This promises to be an interesting and enjoyable afternoon, which at the moment has a few spare places. If you are interesting in joining this visit please contact Jenny Vye on 830983 after 6.00 pm. to reserve your place.

SATURDAY 22 June 2001—Ypres visit

The itinerary will be:-

0700 am Coach departs Bridge Post Office

0821 am Eurotunnel Folkestone to Calais


Please note by **Tunnel** and not by ferry

11 30 am Arrive Ypres.

1130 am -3.00 pm In Ypres.


With opportunities to visit the Menin Gate, Flanders Field Museum, Ramparts Walk, St Georges Church, The Cathedral and various other places of interest and of course chocolate shops and Cafes. Of particular interest is a new museum located at the end of the Ramparts Walk behind a Café & bar. The museum gives an impression of life in the trenches during the First World War in the Ypres area with audio-visual displays and is very thought-provoking. After visiting the museum there is a chance to drink some Remembrance Beer which is brewed on the premises. A short walk

NEW IN YPRES




'T KLEIN RIJSEL

CAFE ~ SNACK



CURIOSITY "FIRST WORLD WAR"

CONTINUOUS AUDIO / VIDEO DOKUMENTARY 1914-1918
CAFETERIA IN A UNIQUE SETTING



HERE CAN YOU DRINK
"REMEMBRANCE BEER"
VREDESBIER
ON DRAUGHT

OPEN FROM 10.30H
TO 23.30H
CLOSED WEDNESDAY

from the museum is the Ramparts cemetery which although small is one of the most stunning. Owing to the time that we have available it will not be possible to visit any of the larger cemeteries such as Tyne Cot etc. At this time of year there is a huge number of coaches causing delays and congestion at the more well-known sites. I would much rather our time was taken up in giving you a taste of the area rather than sitting in a coach.

3.00 pm Depart Ypres for Poperinge {Talbot house} arriving 3.30 pm

Poperinge is a peaceful Flemish town surrounded by hop fields. Soldiers were sent here on leave from the Salient. Dubbed "Pops" by the weary troops, the lively town provided a brief rest from the horrors of war. Back then, Poperinge was a great town; it was even called Little Paris.

Small shops, restaurants, cafes, cinemas and dance halls were frequently visited by the troops.

Talbot House in Poperinge is one of the most evocative sights left from the Great War. It was here that Reverend Philip "Tubby" Clayton opened a clubhouse for soldiers. Named in honour of Gilbert Talbot who was killed at Hooge in 1915, it became known as Toc H after the army signal code used in the war. More than half a million soldiers visited the club, where they could play the piano, borrow books and forget the terrors that were happening a few miles away. The chapel has remained untouched since 1918, it is simply called "UPSTAIRS". I have arranged a guided tour of this wonderful house for our party with the curator, who makes every visit a special event. There will also be a demonstration in the house by a gentleman well known in Belgium and the rest of the world who makes models from shrapnel and bullets found on the old battlefields. He is known as "Shrapnel Charlie" and his work is quite stunning. This has been laid on especially for us and is a great honour. After visiting Talbot House there will be a short time to look around the town before heading back to Calais and the trip home. I think and hope the day will be enjoyable, and remain in our memories for many years to come.

6.00 pm Depart Poperinge for Calais

7.51 pm Depart Calais to Folkestone by Tunnel

9.00 pm Arrive Bridge Post Office.

There are still a few places left so, please, if you want to join us telephone John Bishop on 832596

NEXT YEAR'S PROGRAMME

We are planning next year's programme and if you have any suggestions as to what you would like to hear about or where you would like to visit we would be pleased to hear from you.

We are thinking of changing the format of the Christmas buffet to a Victorian Christmas lunch and would be very interested in your views

Please contact any committee member

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If you have changed your address or will do before next year's programme is sent out in August, please contact the membership secretary:-

Mr. David Gilmour,

St. Quentin, Bekesbourne Lane,

Bekesbourne, Kent CT4 5DY

Telephone 832450

Printed and Published by David Gilmour on behalf of Bridge & District History Society.

August 2002

A message from the Chairman

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members for their support over the last year. I hope each and every one of you found something of interest. Thanks also to all members of the committee for all their hard work

This season's programme has now been finalised and I hope it meets with your approval. We have, I hope, managed to find some interesting speakers to tempt you to the village hall on a cold and wet winter's evening, as well as to the pub of course.

Please book early for our events and outings, we will keep to the same booking format as this year which worked quite well. We welcome any comments or suggestions you may have. Please do not hesitate to contact any member of the committee or myself with them. I look forward to welcoming you in September, when the new season begins.

John Bishop.

The new programme for 2002-3

We start the year as usual with the Annual General Meeting on Tuesday the 24th September, but please, this year, let us hear from you. What do you want to see and do? Is the programme meeting your needs? Would you like more visits and less evening meetings, or the other way around, or is the balance right? It's your Society so let's hear from you.

The Christmas get together, on Saturday the 14th December, will take a different form this year. We will be having a Christmas lunch at the White Horse in Victorian style. We have based the menu on a 1887 Golden Jubilee menu and there will be a choice of courses, including a vegetarian option.

On Tuesday the 11th February 2003 we will once again be at the White Horse for another talk by Martin Lloyd followed by hot refreshments concocted by Alan in his usual inimitable style. We last had a talk by Martin over two years ago and he is always an amusing and entertaining speaker whatever the subject.

We have an additional event in this year's programme, on Saturday the 22nd March we will have an antiques valuer in Bridge Village Hall for the afternoon. We are restricting this to members only and also to two items per member. Come along and bring your items and see what others have hidden away! Further details of the format of this event will be in a future newsletter.

Our only coach visit this season will take place on Saturday the 26th April to Woolwich Arsenal.

We are arranging for a guide who will point out the most interesting things to see in this historical building. There is a special exhibition "Firepower" for which we will have an exclusive guide to talk us through it.

The Kent History Federation annual conference will take place at Cranbrook on Saturday 10th May 2003 and in the March newsletter we will be sending more details of this event. The Kent History Federation are most anxious that more members attend what will be a very enjoyable day.

We have arranged another visit to Bourne House in this programme. The date has not yet been confirmed but it will be sometime in May 2003. We are restricted to a maximum of 30 and priority will be given to those who have not already seen the house. The visit will be strictly limited to members only.

Our final visit of the season will be on Saturday 21st June 2003 to Deal. We have arranged a guided walk with David Collyer and contrary to usual practice we will start with a cream tea instead of ending with it. We will pray for fine weather for this as a fine summer evening would be so nice.

Our meetings in Bridge Village Hall will include talks on Bridge and its history, the recent dig on Star Hill, John Tom of Bossington Wood and A Canterbury Tale, full details are shown in the programme.

Reports on the last events of last years programme.

On Saturday the 22 June 2001 our coach left Bridge Post Office bright and early for our visit to Ypres. We were fortunate that although rain threatened throughout the day we only saw a few spots.. Our first stop was at Sanctuary Wood to visit the Canadian memorial and the cemetery—as always a sobering sight. We then proceeded into Ypres where we were free to explore for several hours.



Ypres Cloth Hall

Our coach then took us to Poperinghe to visit Toc-H. We were given an enthusiastic welcome and explored this fascinating house redolent with so much history of the First World War. The chapel at the top of the house still radiated a sense of peace which must have helped so many to come to terms with their ghastly experiences in the front line.

We were regaled by a "Scottish" piper in full fig who turned out to be a Belgian, who incidentally learned his English by watching Postman Pat on the television. We also met "Shrapnel Charlie" who makes model soldiers and other things from shrapnel collected off the battlefields and melted down and moulded into many unusual artefacts.

Maidstone Visit

A small group of 18 visited Maidstone on Saturday the 18th May. We took the Park and Ride bus to the Archbishop's Palace, where we were welcomed by Trudie Nielson Kerr, our guide who has a wide and deep knowledge of Maidstone and its surroundings and she proved to be a knowledgeable and entertaining guide.

The tour started with a walk up the High Street, where we paused often as our guide pointed out places of interest and she seemed to have a story about a huge range of people in the historic past of Maidstone. We were lucky enough to be able to enter the Council Chamber, a privilege not granted to many. Climbing up from the Council chamber we were amazed to find ourselves in the small and cramped cell where prisoners were housed in the 19th century. Having experienced prison conditions it was quite a relief to find ourselves out in the open air once more. We continued our stroll around Maidstone, stopping at the town Museum where we were able to enter and look around without cost. It is an excellent museum and our "Taste" of what it has to offer, made many of us determined to return for a longer visit on another occasion. We then wound our way back to the magnificent Archbishops Palace where we enjoyed a splendid cream tea. A tour of the Palace followed our tea and then it was outside again this time to visit a very large church with a wealth of interesting features. We finished our tour with a stroll along the banks of the River Medway and a walk across the new Millennium bridge. All in all it was a very informative and enjoyable afternoon and the History Society members felt that they had a much better understanding of our historic County town. Perhaps the only disappointment was that time ran out and the Drake Tywright Carriage Museum was closed before we could visit it...JV

Increase in Costs

You will have noticed that this season the cost of the Bridge Village talks has increased to £2.00 for members.

We have been forced to increase this charge as the cost and the expenses of the speakers visiting us has been rising inexorably and the old charge was often insufficient to cover those costs. This still represents good value for money, many other organisations are charging as much as this or more for entrance to their evening functions.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If you have changed your address please contact the membership secretary:-

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Bekesbourne, Kent CT4 5DY
Telephone 832450

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November 2002

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

CHANGE OF SPEAKER

Our next meeting in Bridge Village Hall will be Tuesday the 12th November. We have a change of speaker for this meeting. We have unfortunately been let down by our speaker, but we have however been able to arrange an alternative speaker covering the same subject of the Battle of Bossington Wood. At short notice Dick Bolton from Wickhambreux has stepped into the breach.

Dick Bolton is an entertaining speaker and he had been booked to take us around Romney Marsh two years ago when the foot and mouth epidemic forced us to cancel.

We look forward to seeing you at the Village Hall when Dick tells us of this strange episode in Kent's history.

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Christmas is approaching fast and already the shops have their Christmas gifts in stock.

This year we have a change from our normal Christmas get together arrangements. We have arranged a full lunch as opposed to a buffet. We will meet as usual at the White Horse on Saturday the 14th December where Alan has prepared an interesting and nostalgic menu based on a Victorian Golden Jubilee Christmas lunch which we aim to make as authentic as possible in every detail. The full menu is shown in the adjacent column.

To make things more interesting and to transport ourselves back to a more gracious and elegant era we will have a competition for the most appropriately dressed lady or gentleman. We would like all present to wear Victorian headdress, ladies with

bonnets and gentlemen with top-hats. If you wish to wear the full costume, please do so will only add to the fun.

We will also be having a History Quiz at the table with a prize for the highest score

MEAT

Mulligatawny Soup

or

Devilled Kidneys

Baron of Beef

or

Roast Pheasant in Cumberland

Sauce

Vegetables

Plum Pudding

or

Trifle in Syllabub

Mince Pies

Coffee

There will also be a roast vegetable vegetarian alternative if required.

Please join us for a great party and a super convivial time by sending in your slips as soon as possible to David Gilmour, St. Quentin, Bekesbourne Lane, Bekesbourne, Kent, CT4 5DY— Telephone 832450.

Our first meeting in the New Year will be on Tuesday the 14th January when Paul Tritton will show excerpts and interpret the unusual film of "A Canterbury Tale" with many glimpses of wartime Canterbury and district. If you have seen the film you will learn more, if you have not you will be amazed at its theme. This film was directed by Bekesbourne born Michael Powell and no doubt he drew on his knowledge of the district to form the backdrop to his story. We look forward to seeing you.

REPORT ON THE TALK IN SEPTEMBER

Bridge: The first 2000 years

This ambitiously titled talk on Tuesday the 24th September by our Treasurer Maurice Raraty took a swift tour of the history of the village from Neolithic times to the present.

The area around Bridge was well populated from the earliest period, as finds from a recent dig on Star Hill show. This has also uncovered a large Roman funerary platform (more about this later in the year from the archaeologist Paul Wilkinson) as well as much material from more recent times, reflecting the strong military presence around Bridge through the years.

Old maps can also give information about the development of the village: Brewery Lane for instance marks the original entrance way to Bridge Place, as well as indicating the location of the ancient malthouse, while its continuation as Mill Lane only appears on the maps after 1801, when the windmill was built after its removal from the scarp of Bridge down. Church memorials of course offer insights into the lives of past inhabitants: Frederick Colegate for instance, publican of the White Horse, carpenter and builder, or Amelius Sicard, the local doctor for 48 years. Many others come to life by these means. Pictures of the village and of the great houses appear in the 17th century for the first time, while local newspapers offer fascinating glimpses into the business of everyday life in the 18th and 19th centuries, when Bridge was alive with, especially, the more sporting and 'racy' citizenry - Canterbury races on Barham Downs brought crowds of both gentry and plebeians, at other times there were foot races for both men and girls, cricket in Bourne Park attracted crowds numbering tens of thousands, and on a lower level, The White Horse and The Horse and Groom (alias Bridge Hill House) encouraged cockfighting or (more peaceably) flower shows, forerunners of the Horticultural

Society. Scrutiny of local buildings shows that many may have vanished in the rush to modernisation and the imperatives of Britain's main highway to Europe (most notoriously Bridge Farm in the 1960's), but much also remains. The Village Hall, Reading Room, military recreation room and café and even earlier, Methodist Chapel; the Post Office, formerly Chapel Yard, Mr Colegate's builder's yard. Much too can be gleaned from place-names, so many of which have vanished - names not only of houses: Hillside, Glen Falls, Lansberry Cottage, but also of locations, such as Kingsbury Lane, Pouts Hill Wood and Abbots Hoath. A whole way of life and travel is revived by a name such as Stickfast Hill, on the way up to the Gate Inn. The traffic jams that occasionally clog the village nowadays are perhaps a pale reflection of the multitudes of people who have passed through in the course of centuries. The coming of the Bypass marked an end of that era, and the start of a more tranquil one.

The lecture could only hint at some of these people, places and events. There is much more to be told.

A visit to Wye and Wye College

A report on the visit To Wye and Wye College on the 19th October was not received in time for publication and will be included in the next newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

Your membership card for this season is enclosed with this newsletter. If your name is spelt incorrectly on the card or your address is incorrect on the envelope please let the membership secretary David Gilmour, address below, know.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please also let the Membership Secretary know if you change your address or telephone number.

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